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Contact: Lisa Cohen
Phone 310.395.2544
lisa@lisacohen.org

TEXAS IS AHEAD OF MOST STATES IN ALIGNMENT OF TEACHER PREPARATION WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS

Texas's teacher preparation policies are stronger than most states in terms of ensuring that new teachers are ready to help students achieve to the high levels necessary for college and careers; there is still some room for improvement.

December 10, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) today released its eighth annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*. This year's edition focuses on Texas' efforts to align its requirements for teacher preparation and licensure with the skills needed to prepare students for college and careers.

NCTQ Vice President and Managing Director for State Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "With more focus than ever on ensuring students are ready for college and careers, it would stand to reason that Texas would be making key changes to requirements for teacher preparation and licensure. And there is no better place to start than where new teachers begin to learn their craft—in teacher preparation programs."

Key Yearbook Findings:

Although better than most states, Texas' teacher preparation requirements are not consistently explicit about preparing teachers for college- and career-readiness standards.

- Texas has done more than most states to articulate the instructional requirements of college- and career-readiness standards, including the use of informational texts, cross-disciplinary literacy, and intervention for struggling readers. However, these requirements are not fully and consistently addressed across all grade levels.

State content knowledge requirements for prospective teachers in Texas still have room for improvement.

- Texas is one of 21 states that requires elementary teaching candidates to pass content tests that include separate passing scores for each of the four core subject areas, helping to ensure that elementary teachers have mastered the content they will be licensed to teach.
- However, Texas does not ensure that teachers have knowledge of the science of reading.
- Along with 37 other states, Texas has significant loopholes in its licensing requirements for high school teachers.

Texas has strong policies for preparing special education teachers compared to other states.

- Texas is one of just 17 states in the nation that does not grant K-12 special education teacher licenses. Texas also requires elementary special education teachers to demonstrate subject matter knowledge as a condition of licensure.

Texas' teacher preparation admissions requirements are more selective than many states' admission policies.

- While Texas only has a required GPA of 2.75 for admission into teacher prep programs, the state also requires prospective teachers to pass a test of academic proficiency that is normed to the college-bound population prior to entry, which sets a higher bar than most states for the academic performance of prospective teachers.

Texas collects important data on the performance of teacher prep programs in the state but doesn't hold teacher prep programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

- Texas is one of 10 states in the nation that connects student achievement data to teacher preparation programs.
- Texas has not yet set explicit minimum performance standards for teacher preparation programs in the state.

Looking at NCTQ's traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Texas earns an overall grade of B for teacher preparation.

- The average grade for all states for teacher preparation in 2014 is a C, up from a D in 2011.

The [2014 Texas State Teacher Policy Yearbook](#) is immediately available for free download. The redesigned website also provides searchable access to the entire *Yearbook* dataset, including topical pages with up-to-date data on state teacher policy, a customized search tool and user-friendly options for generating graphic results that can be exported and shared.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Gleason Family Foundation, J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, the Joyce Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality— comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents— is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. More information about NCTQ, including a list of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board, can be found on the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org.